

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

10 DR SYSTEMS, INC., ) Case No. 09cv1625-H (BLM)  
11 Plaintiff, )  
12 v. ) ORDER GRANTING MOTIONS FOR  
13 EASTMAN KODAK CO., ) PROTECTIVE ORDER AND TO QUASH  
14 Defendant. ) THE SUBPOENA SERVED UPON DR.  
 ) ELIOT SIEGEL  
 ) [Doc. Nos. 1 and 2]  
)

15 On May 19, 2009, Dr. Eliot L. Siegel filed the instant Motion to  
16 Quash the Subpoena Duces Tecum served upon him by DR Systems, Inc. ("DR  
17 Systems") in the District of Maryland. Doc. No. 1. Eastman Kodak  
18 Company ("Kodak") filed a companion motion seeking an order prohibiting  
19 Dr. Siegel's deposition. Doc. No. 2. DR Systems timely opposed the  
20 motions [doc. no. 4] and, on June 16, 2009, Dr. Siegel and Kodak replied  
21 [doc. no. 6]. On July 24, 2009, the matter was transferred from the  
22 District of Maryland to this district and subsequently low-numbered to  
23 the underlying case, DR Systems, Inc. v. Eastman Kodak Company, Case No.  
24 3:08cv669-H (BLM). Doc. Nos. 13, 16. The Court took the matters under  
25 submission pursuant to Civil Local Rule 7.1(d)(1). Having reviewed the  
26 briefing submitted, and for the reasons set forth below, the motions to  
27 quash the subpoena and for a protective order are **GRANTED**.

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## Background

2 On April 14, 2008, DR Systems filed a Complaint for declaratory  
3 judgment asking the Court to declare Kodak's patent, U.S. Patent No.  
4 5,414,811 (hereinafter "the '811 patent"),<sup>1</sup> invalid and to find that DR  
5 Systems did not infringe the '811 patent. Case No. 3:08cv669-H (BLM),  
6 Doc. No. 1. On May 7, 2008, Kodak answered and counterclaimed for  
7 declarations of the '811 patent's validity and DR Systems' infringement.  
8 Id., doc. no. 9. On June 20, 2008, the Court issued a Case Management  
9 Order requiring that all experts be identified by March 16, 2009. Id.,  
10 doc. no. 15. Neither party identified Dr. Siegel as an expert. Doc.  
11 No. 1, Ex. U (DR Systems' Initial Expert Disclosures). On April 22,  
12 2009, DR Systems served a subpoena duces tecum on Dr. Seigel, a  
13 University of Maryland Professor and Vice Chair of the Information  
14 Systems Department of Diagnostic Radiology, and an expert witness in  
15 previous litigation between Kodak and DR Systems. Doc. No. 1.

16 DR Systems contends that its subpoena is proper because it is  
17 seeking Dr. Siegel's testimony as a fact witness, not an expert witness.  
18 Doc. No. 4 at 2-3. DR Systems states that the deposition testimony  
19 would "be narrowly focused to: 1) the identification of medical imaging  
20 systems prior to November 1991 and 2) the explanation of such systems  
21 and discussion of any documents contemporaneous to such systems." Id.  
22 at 4. DR Systems asserts that Dr. Siegel has personal knowledge of such  
23 information because he has worked in this field for more than twenty  
24 years. Id. at 4-5. DR Systems contends that such testimony is relevant  
25 to its "obviousness analysis," which, in turn, "is directly relevant to  
26 the invalidity of Kodak's patent." Id. at 5.

27 Dr. Siegel responds that DR Systems improperly seeks information

<sup>1</sup>The '811 patent concerns technology for displaying digital images. Doc. No. 1.

1 that is solely the subject of expert testimony. Doc. No. 1 at 7. Kodak  
 2 points out that Dr. Siegel

3 is not, and has never been, a Kodak employee. He has nothing  
 4 to do with the patent-in-suit and has no knowledge of that  
 5 patent. [He] is not, and has never been, an employee of DR  
 6 Systems and there is no reason to believe he has knowledge of  
 7 DR Systems' accused products. Nor is there any reason to  
 8 believe that [he] has knowledge of any prior art that might  
 9 have been disclosed by DR's invalidity contentions...[i]n  
 10 short, [he] has nothing to do with this case.

11 Id. at 6. Dr. Siegel confirms that he "was not involved in the  
 12 development of the invention described in the '811 Patent" and that he  
 13 had not seen a copy of the patent prior to the execution of his  
 14 declaration. Id., Ex. P (Declaration of Eliot L. Siegel, M.D.). Dr.  
 15 Siegel explains that in order to testify on the identified subjects, he  
 16 would have to conduct research to familiarize himself with the terms of  
 17 the '811 patent and with any "prior art" that may have been available.  
 18 Id. He also asserts that it would take him "many hours" to search for  
 19 and locate any potentially responsive documents. Id. As such, Dr.  
 20 Siegel and Kodak contend that "the purpose of the subpoena ... is to  
 21 obtain testimony about 'obviousness' and 'secondary considerations,'  
 22 topics that are uniquely the subject of expert testimony." Doc. No. 1  
 23 at 7. Because Dr. Siegel was not identified as an expert by either  
 24 party, he asks the Court to enter a protective order quashing the  
 25 subpoena duces tecum served upon him. Id. at 9, 21-22.

26 **Legal Standard**

27 The scope of discovery is defined by Federal Rule of Civil  
 28 Procedure 26(b). Pursuant to that rule, litigants may obtain discovery  
 29 regarding "any nonprivileged matter that is relevant to any party's  
 30 claim or defense." Fed.R.Civ.P. 26(b)(1). Relevant information for  
 31 discovery purposes includes any information "reasonably calculated to

1 lead to the discovery of admissible evidence." Id.

2 District courts enjoy broad discretion both to determine relevancy  
 3 for discovery purposes, see Hallett v. Morgan, 296 F.3d 732, 751 (9th  
 4 Cir. 2002), and to limit discovery to prevent its abuse. See  
 5 Fed.R.Civ.P. 26(b)(2). For example, a court may limit the scope of any  
 6 discovery method if it determines that the discovery sought is  
 7 "unreasonably cumulative or duplicative," or is obtainable "from some  
 8 other source that is more convenient, less burdensome, or less  
 9 expensive." Fed.R.Civ.P. 26(b)(2)(C). Similarly, district courts are  
 10 directed to limit discovery where "the burden or expense of the proposed  
 11 discovery outweighs its likely benefit." Id.

12 Under Rule 45, any party may serve a subpoena commanding a non-  
 13 party "to attend and testify" or to "produce designated documents."  
 14 Fed.R.Civ.P. 45(a)(1)(A)(iii). Any such subpoena is subject to the  
 15 relevance requirements set forth in Rule 26(b). Fed.R.Civ.P. 26(b)(1).  
 16 If requested, a court may quash or modify the subpoena for a variety of  
 17 reasons, including that the subpoena "subjects a person to undue  
 18 burden." Fed.R.Civ.P. 45(c)(3)(A). A party cannot simply object to a  
 19 subpoena served on a non-party, but rather must move to quash or seek a  
 20 protective order. See Moon v. SCP Pool Corp., 232 F.R.D. 633, 636 (C.D.  
 21 Cal. 2005). The party who moves to quash a subpoena has the burden of  
 22 persuasion. Id. at 637.

23 Courts have broad discretion to determine whether a subpoena is  
 24 unduly burdensome. See Exxon Shipping Co. v. U.S. Dep't of Interior, 34  
 25 F.3d 774, 779 (9th Cir. 1994). For example, a subpoena is unduly  
 26 burdensome where it seeks to compel production of documents regarding  
 27 topics unrelated to or beyond the scope of the litigation. See Mattel,  
 28 Inc. v. Walking Mountain Prods., 353 F.3d 792, 813-14 (9th Cir. 2003)

1 (holding subpoenas properly quashed where their overbreadth led the  
 2 court to conclude that subpoenas were "served for the purpose of  
 3 annoying and harassment and not really for the purpose of getting  
 4 information."). Again, the moving party bears the burden of  
 5 establishing that a subpoena is unduly burdensome. See F.D.I.C. v.  
 6 Garner, 126 F.3d 1138, 1146 (9th Cir. 1997).

7 Finally, Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 45(c)(3)(B)(ii) authorizes  
 8 a court to modify or quash a subpoena if it requires disclosure of "an  
 9 unretained expert's opinion or information that does not describe  
 10 specific occurrences in dispute and results from the expert's study that  
 11 was not requested by a party." The advisory committee note clarifies  
 12 that the determination "should be informed by the degree to which the  
 13 expert is being called because of his knowledge of facts relevant to the  
 14 case rather than in order to give opinion testimony...." Fed.R.Civ.P.  
 15 45(c)(3)(B)(ii) advisory committee's note (citations and quotation marks  
 16 omitted).

17 Discussion

18 The outcome of these motions hinge on the distinction between  
 19 percipient and expert witness testimony. While the Federal Rules of  
 20 Evidence do not explicitly define "expert testimony," they provide that  
 21 it encompasses any helpful "scientific, technical, or other specialized  
 22 knowledge," whether presented in the form of an opinion "or otherwise."  
 23 Fed.R.Evid. 702. Generally, expert testimony is testimony that a  
 24 witness prepares using an analysis based on specialized knowledge. See  
 25 e.g., Hynix Semiconductor Inc. v. Rambus, Inc., 2009 WL 230039, \*10-11  
 26 (N.D.Cal. 2009).<sup>2</sup> In contrast, percipient witness testimony is based on

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28 <sup>2</sup>Indeed, the purpose of the Rule 26(a)(2) disclosure requirement is to prevent surprise testimony by ensuring that opposing parties are aware of the nature of the expert opinions prior to trial. See Fed.R.Civ.P. 26(a)(2); Britz Fertilizers, Inc. v. Bayer Corp., 2009 WL 1748775, \*3 (E.D. Cal. June 17, 2009).

1 the first hand experience of the witness, i.e., the observations and  
 2 conduct of the witness. See Fed.R.Evid. 701; Blitz Fertilizers, Inc. v.  
 3 Bayer Corp., 2009 WL 1748775, \*3 (E.D. Cal. June 17, 2009).

4 Here, Dr. Siegel declares that he was not involved in the  
 5 development of the invention described in the '811 patent and has no  
 6 personal knowledge of the '811 patent. Doc. No. 1, Ex. P. DR Systems  
 7 does not provide any contradictory information, other than to state that  
 8 "it has been difficult to locate independent third persons who have  
 9 actual personal knowledge before November 1991 of working with digital  
 10 medical imaging devices. Dr. Siegel is such a person with access to  
 11 this knowledge and documents." Doc. No. 4 at 5. Such a general  
 12 statement does not transform Dr. Siegel into a percipient witness  
 13 subject to subpoena. See Chavez v. Board of Educ. of Tularosa Mun.  
 14 School, 2007 WL 1306734, \*2, 8 (D.N.M. Feb. 16, 2007) (quashing the  
 15 deposition of an unretained expert who had no knowledge of the  
 16 underlying facts of the case and was never employed by a party to the  
 17 dispute).

18 Moreover, Dr. Siegel declares that he would have to conduct  
 19 research and analysis before he could provide the requested testimony.  
 20 Doc. No. 1, Ex. P; see also, doc. no. 4, exs. D-F (email correspondence  
 21 confirming that Dr. Siegel would have to conduct research and that DR  
 22 Systems would pay for such work). Such preparation is characteristic of  
 23 expert testimony. Hynix Semiconductor, 2009 WL 230039, at \*11 ("As a  
 24 general rule of thumb, the court understands 'expert testimony' to be  
 25 testimony that a witness prepares, as opposed to testimony of what a  
 26 witness observes."). In fact, it appears that to the extent Dr. Siegel  
 27 has relevant information, he possesses it via his expertise in the field  
 28 and "years of study and research," rather than any percipient  
 observations. Doc. No. 1 at 12 and Ex. P; see Glaxosmithkline Consumer

1 Healthcare, L.P. v. Merix Pharmaceutical Corp., 2007 WL 1051759, \*3, 5  
 2 (D.Utah April 2, 2007) (denying motion to compel deposition when  
 3 deponent could testify about facts helpful to party's theory of the case  
 4 that "came to his attention by his study independent of any party in the  
 5 case.").

6 Additionally, DR Systems explains that the requested testimony is  
 7 relevant to obviousness and invalidity allegations. Doc. No. 4 at 5.  
 8 The Court finds that such information is typical of that elicited from  
 9 experts in patent cases. See Hynix Semiconductor 2009 WL 230039, at \*10  
 10 ("[T]he Federal Circuit recently remarked that a '[non-expert]' may not  
 11 testify to...'obviousness, or any of the underlying technical  
 12 questions'"); Marine Polymer Technologies, Inc. v. HemCon, Inc., 2009 WL  
 13 801826, \*5 (D.N.H. March 24, 2009) ("A witness's testimony about the  
 14 obviousness of an invention, in patent litigation, however, requires  
 15 'highly technical and specialized knowledge' that is beyond the scope of  
 16 Rule 701.").

17 Because Dr. Siegal had no involvement with the patents or  
 18 inventions at issue in this litigation, and his proposed testimony is  
 19 not based on percipient observations but developed over time using his  
 20 "technical" or "specialized knowledge" and buttressed with additional  
 21 investigation and research, it is "expert testimony" as defined by Rule  
 22 702. Fed.R.Evid. 702; see Hynix Semiconductor, 2009 WL 230039, at \*10-  
 23 11. The Court will not allow DR Systems to solicit such testimony from  
 24 Dr. Siegel as he was not timely identified as an expert witness by  
 25 either party and DR Systems has not shown a "substantial need" for such  
 26 testimony. Fed.R.Civ.P. 45(3)(C)(1).

27 To the extent that DR Systems is seeking true "factual" testimony  
 28 from Dr. Siegel, the Court declines to allow DR Systems to engage in a  
 fishing expedition this late in the case. See Rivera v. NIBCO, Inc.,

1 364 F.2d 1057, 1072 (9th Cir. 2004) ("District courts need not condone  
2 the use of discovery to engage in 'fishing expedition[s]'"). In  
3 justifying their subpoena, DR Systems explains that "it is possible that  
4 Dr. Siegel may also have knowledge about the existence of a prior art  
5 device of which DR Systems is not yet aware." Doc. No. 4 at 5. DR  
6 Systems also states that it wants to "explore Dr. Siegel's recollection"  
7 of devices and systems available in the pre-November 1991 time frame.  
8 Id. However, fact discovery has ended and DR Systems acknowledges that  
9 it already has hired an expert to testify about "what the hypothetical  
10 'persons of skill in the art' knew or did not know" during the relevant  
11 time frame. Id. at 11. Therefore, any percipient, relevant testimony  
12 Dr. Siegel might be able to provide would be duplicative and cumulative  
13 of other discovery and the burden of obtaining such testimony will  
14 likely outweigh its benefit. See Fed.R.Civ.P. 26(b) (2) (C) .

15 **Conclusion**

16 For the foregoing reasons, the Court **GRANTS** Dr. Siegel's Motion to  
17 Quash the subpoena served upon him and Kodak's Motion for a Protective  
18 Order.

19 **IT IS SO ORDERED.**

20  
21 DATED: September 14, 2009

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23 BARBARA L. MAJOR  
24 United States Magistrate Judge  
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